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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE REPORT ON UNITED STATES WETLANDS AVAILABLE

Wetlands of the United States--Their extent and their value to waterfowl and other wildlife--a report which looks toward the day "when a combination of soil science and greater wildlife-value appreciation will result in setting aside more and more wetland sites for wildlife use"--is ready for public distribution, Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton said today. The report climaxes a two-year inventory and specialized study of America's wetlands by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

While this is not the first inventory of the Nation's wetlands, it is the first such inventory designed to delineate the wildlife value of the wetlands and to set the wildlife resource in proper perspective with other resources in a balanced land-use pattern.

The report shows that Federal and State agencies engaged in the conflicting programs of wetlands destruction and wetlands preservation must work together to develop wetland-use programs that will permit America to have both agricultural and industrial progress and a continuing wildlife resource.

This new inventory will get extensive use in waterfowl management. It will be of great value in the development of over-all habitat management plans by flyways. It also will be a guide to selections of individual wetlands for improvement as part of a watershed plan or as a private duck marsh. It can be used too by Federal and State agencies responsible for flood control, drainage, and related land-use adjustments to gain a perspective on the status of waterfowl habitat in areas where their projects are being planned. In some instances, these projects can be carried out in wetland areas without injury to the waterfowl, while in others any drainage will destroy irreplaceable habitat.

The report covers 74,440,000 acres of wetlands in the United States with an estimate of between five and seven million additional acres which were bypassed. At least 90 percent of the waterfowl use of wetlands occurs in the areas covered.

Of the 74,440,000 acres, 8,820,000 acres are classified as high-value habitat for waterfowl and another 13,617,000 acres as moderate in value. On the lower part of the waterfowl value scale, 24,088,000 and 27,915,000 acres are rated low and negligible, respectively. The best waterfowl wetlands, therefore, are the rarest, and the ones of poorest quality are the most abundant. The attached table shows acreages by States and by waterfowl values.

There is one chapter devoted to the history of wetlands drainage from the time of the Swamp Land Acts of 1849, 1850 and 1860 by which the Federal Government ceded to 15 States nearly 65 million acres of marsh within their respective borders. It points out in passing that the extensive coastal marshes of the 13 original States and those of Texas did not at any time belong to the Federal Government.

In the report also there is a discussion on the encouragement of local wetlands projects, flyway management, watershed and land-use planning, and wetland development and preservation.

There are comprehensive discussions on the role of wildlife refuges in the conservation of waterfowl and other animals, refuge management, public control of refuges, as well as information on the extent and nature of the peat, muck, and alluvial soils which underlie most of our wetlands.

The inventory itself is accompanied by numerous maps, charts, photographs and tables. A large fold-up map in the pocket of the report shows (by colored dots) the distribution of wetlands according to their relative values for waterfowl within each State.

Wetlands are classified into 20 different types within four major categories: Inland fresh, inland saline, coastal fresh, and coastal saline areas.

While most of the report deals with waterfowl values, it shows how the wetlands make signal contributions to other forms of wildlife. Wetlands help to harbor more than 50 fur and game species. Wooded swamps, though generally low in waterfowl value, are used by more species of resident game than any other type of wetland. Even in these days of low raw fur prices, the swamps and marshes annually yield \$50,000,000 in pelts from muskrat, raccoon, mink and other fur animals.

A tabulation showing "The Value of Wetlands to Waterfowl based on State-unit Determinations" is attached.

Wetlands of the United States is Fish and Wildlife Circular No. 39. It is for sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Government Printing Office, Washington 25, D. C.

VALUE OF WETLANDS TO WATERFOWL
BASED ON STATE-UNIT DETERMINATIONS
(Acres)

STATE	High	Moderate	Low	Negligible	Total
Alabama	26,500	249,600	1,092,200	230,100	1,598,400
Arizona	16,500	11,400	500	--	28,400
Arkansas	926,600	699,400	1,496,700	662,700	3,785,400
California	317,800	176,200	57,600	7,700	559,300
Colorado	35,800	101,600	211,900	55,100	404,400
Connecticut	6,900	8,000	4,800	3,700	23,400
Delaware	24,600	40,700	49,600	16,400	131,300
Florida	423,000	1,659,900	6,585,200	8,517,200	17,185,300
Georgia	20,900	440,400	1,428,900	4,029,300	5,919,500
Idaho	59,300	23,100	21,400	5,100	108,900
Illinois	75,700	196,100	112,700	42,800	427,300
Indiana	151,600	68,900	33,600	29,300	283,400
Iowa	57,100	51,600	--	29,400	138,100
Kansas	120,800	65,900	17,500	--	204,200
Kentucky	84,400	27,400	34,200	127,100	273,100
Louisiana	706,800	1,706,200	1,092,500	6,141,800	9,647,300
Maine	108,500	52,200	140,300	80,300	381,300
Maryland	112,600	87,800	51,100	38,500	290,000
Massachusetts	46,600	55,700	80,200	49,200	231,700
Michigan	310,500	2,013,200	430,100	463,300	3,217,100
Minnesota	1,274,500	778,800	2,991,600	--	5,044,900
Mississippi	316,200	682,200	854,700	736,300	2,589,400
Missouri	105,700	93,100	74,000	104,100	376,900
Montana	29,100	113,300	45,000	--	187,400
Nebraska	197,800	171,000	281,000	--	649,800
Nevada	109,100	70,400	13,000	--	192,500
New Hampshire	5,700	4,800	1,700	1,300	13,500
New Jersey	127,500	109,100	32,400	900	269,900
New Mexico	24,500	12,900	11,100	--	48,500
New York	99,800	35,700	55,100	22,200	212,800
North Carolina	81,100	38,500	505,200	3,429,800	4,054,600
North Dakota	554,900	653,600	314,800	--	1,523,300
Ohio	38,500	12,300	19,300	27,800	97,900
Oklahoma	18,500	133,800	127,400	--	279,700
Oregon	246,000	76,800	131,900	17,900	472,600
Pennsylvania	8,600	15,100	15,800	13,400	52,900
Rhode Island	1,900	2,100	4,000	17,400	25,400
South Carolina	10,900	194,400	1,495,600	1,676,100	3,377,000
South Dakota	161,400	414,200	176,400	--	752,000
Tennessee	447,600	128,200	128,600	123,600	828,000
Texas	586,400	1,597,800	923,500	633,300	3,741,000
Utah	249,400	342,100	315,800	267,100	1,174,400
Vermont	6,700	9,500	13,000	8,900	38,100
Virginia	28,300	85,900	177,700	249,200	541,100
Washington	54,300	53,900	68,100	56,900	233,200
West Virginia	1,600	--	2,200	--	3,800
Wisconsin	389,500	48,200	2,352,900	--	2,790,600
Wyoming	11,900	3,500	14,900	--	30,300
Totals	8,819,900	13,616,500	24,087,700	27,915,200	74,439,300

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